ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

JUAN TANK

WILLIAMS RANGER DISTRICT

KAIBAB NATIONAL FOREST

PREPARED BY: D B Reed DATE: 12/27/95
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Basic Description of Project Area

The Juan Tank Allotment is located adjacent of Williams, Arizona and contains 19,642 acres. Of that amount, 879 acres are excluded and are either controlled by the grazing permittee or other landowners. An estimated 13,600 acres or 75 percent of the allotment is considered fully capable for grazing and an estimated capacity calculated. The remaining lands are classed as either potential or no capability to sustain livestock activity and were excluded from any capacity assessment. The NC classifications were normally associated with steep slopes or very shallow soils. In contrast the PC areas usually occupied gentle slopes but due to high basal areas of trees, as an example, forage production was so low that assigning any capacity was not warranted. In most cases the PC classed lands represent dense stands of woodland or coniferous trees which include Utah juniper, one-seed juniper, pinyon pine and ponderosa pine. There are three main pastures including Juan, Button, and Sisters.

Goals and Objectives of Management

The goals of the revised management plan for the Juan Tank Allotment include the following items:

1. Produce the maximum amount of forage, consistent with other resource values, for use by wildlife and livestock on a sustained yield basis.

2. Improve habitat diversity, forage production, and overall capacity for both livestock and wildlife in the pinyon-juniper ecosystems. Currently, the rapid regeneration of tree species in the treated zones has reduced overall capacity and range resource value ratings.

3. Balance capacity of the project area with the management intensity demonstrated by the grazing permittee and the forage capacity inventoried within the allotment.

To accomplish the above stated goals a series of site specific objectives were developed and management practices identified. Over the next five to 10 years the activities to be implemented to achieve the desired conditions include:

1. Continuation of the three pasture deferred rotation grazing strategy with one modification. This change includes the use of Button Pasture once every three years to hold livestock for four to six weeks to enable the Sisters unit to fully recovery from two years of spring grazing.

2. Identification and additional NEPA assessment of 3,020 acres of retreatments in the grassland habitat type which has been identified with encroachment of pinyon-juniper trees. This includes, but is not limited too, the area around Copper and Ryberg Tanks (Priority #1), western portion of Juan Pasture (#2), Button Tank area and south (#3), and Juan Pasture north of the 124 Road (#4).

3. Identification and additional NEPA analysis for 1500 acres of overstory removal either through prescribed fire or a commercial harvest in the ponderosa pine habitat type in Sisters Pasture. This includes areas around Sereno and Signal Tanks as well as Holden Lake.

4. Reconstruction of the following water sources with possible sealing:

Priority #1 - Cooper Tank
Priority #2 - Ryberg Tank
Priority #3 - Signal Tank
Priority #4 - Button Tank
Priority #5 - Canyon Tank
Priority #6 - Sereno Tank

Animal Husbandry and Type of Operation

The permittee maintains a cross breed commercial herd. Under current management the bulls remain with the cow herd yearlong which promotes a percentage of calves to be carried over to the winter grazing period. Normallly, these animals are sold in May during the move onto the summer range. Calves produced during the winter period are usually sold after gathering in the fall.

Permitted Number and Season of Use

The term permit will been issued for 190 adult cattle with an authorized season of use from 1/1 to 12/31.

Range Limitations and Allowable Use

Several limitations are inventoried on the allotment which will effect livestock distribution patterns. Even though an estimated 6,500 acres of pushing was undertaken by the permittee, these treatments are now 30 years old, and a significant amount of woodland tree regeneration has occured. The overall loss in livestock and wildlife capacity is unknown, however, without aggressive retreatment over the next five to 10 years it is felt that the permitted number will be higher than existing capacity.

There is also a need to reconstruct several waters as well as waterlots to promote improved distribution. The cleaning of these tanks will provide for dependable watering points for two or three years instead of the current one or two during low runoff regimes.

The allowable use is set at 40 percent in the key areas (grassland and savanna type) during the dormant period and 30 percent within the growing season which is considered from March 15 to May 31.

Problems and Conflict

Several problems areas are found on the allotment that could result in resource

conflicts. The rapid increase in elk numbers could result in forage allocation problems if the Game and Fish departmant does not continue its program of harvesting cows. At the present time there does not appear to be a significant utilization problem, however, it will require continual monitoring of elk populations and actual utilization values to assess potential resource conflicts in the future.

Grazing Schedule

The management strategy calls for a deferred rotation grazing sequence. The grazing allocation generally follows this pattern:

1. Normally, the herd will rotate out of Juan Pasture on or about May 1 to the Sisters unit for four months. At the conclusion of the grazing period in Sisters Pasture (August 31) the livestock will be moved to Button for approximately 3 months at which time they will be placed into Juan Pasture. This allocation sequence will be authorized for two years and modified to allow cool-season plant recovery and litter accumulation in the Sisters unit with the scheduled use of Button Pasture in May and early June.

The planned grazing sequence is shown graphically on the attached form R3-2200-19.

Distribution Aids to be Used

Salt is an important tool in obtaining livestock distribution and should be placed away from waters to achieve proper use in areas that historically do not receive livestock impacts. No more than three blocks of salt should be used, and these supplements need to be placed in bins or on rocks to prevent soil contamination. Once the salt is used, replacement areas are required to prevent trampling and plant loss.

Supplemental feeding is not encouraged, although, it is recognized that current forage conditions may not furnish all the animals needs and requirements. In addition, under heavy snow cover feeding of alfalfa might be required to cover the energy requirements of the animals. In both cases the same standards as the salting program apply. The permittee will also be required to keep a list of the supplements used and the locations so inspection of said areas can be accomplished.

Gates on waterlots are to be open. On occasions temporary closing will be permitted to assist in attaining proper livestock distribution. At the completion of the pasture move the permittee is required to re-open and make the improvement available to wildlife.

Herding is considered the most effective tool in achieving the proper utilization patterns on the allotment, and maintaining the livestock in the scheduled pasture. This is especially important during the spring months when the plants begin to grow. Without the livestock in the appropriate unit the disclosed deferment schedules, as displayed in the environmental analysis, will not be met. The permittee will be required to complete all moves within a 10

day time limitation, unless weather or some other factor hampers the gathering and prior permission is granted.

All heavy maintenance of improvements will require advance written approval from the District Ranger. This approval will be provided with the issuance of the permit modification. Forest Service will undertake the necessary surveys and provide the needed NEPA analysis. Prior to the implementation of the project the Forest Service and grazing permittee will review the standards on-the-ground and said guidelines will be incorporated into the permit modifications. If established standards require modification, work will be terminated until the permittee and Forest Service have discussed the situation, and a written authorization to modify has been received.

Vegetation manipulation to promote improved range resource conditions, watershed health, forage/cover ratios and the overall capacity of the allotment will be undertaken under this plan as funding becomes available. This includes identification of proposed treatment units, silvicultural exam, assessment for cultural resources and proper NEPA documentation. Seeding with native forage species will be determined on a case by case basis and will be the result of the environmental analysis process.

The permittee is required to maintain those improvements listed in the term permit. The improvements assigned to the Juan Tank Allotment with notations on current conditions are displayed in the FSRAMIS report, and are attached with to this document.

Monitoring Action

To a large degree this portion of the plan can be found in the Environmental Assessment completed for the allotment pages 41 through 44. The types of monitoring, what that activity includes, and the specific objectives include:

A. Implementation monitoring determines if the program of work activities, prescriptions developed to meet objectives, and livestock management have been implemented as designed, and in compliance with the Forest Plan. Specific actions to be undertaken are:

1. Key Area Utilization Monitoring - Key areas have been identified and will be assessed for compliance to the allowable use criteria as found in this plan. If monitoring establishes rates above this standard, either a reduction in the number of livestock or a shorter grazing period will be implemented. See attached map for the identified key areas.

2. Compliance to the kind and class of livestock, scheduled move dates, and grazing period as identified in the Annual Operating Plan - The annual plan identifies what pastures are to be used in a given year, the length of grazing period, and when the livestock need to be removed to stay within the projected capacity. The permittee will be required to complete the livestock moves within 10 days. At no time will livestock use be extended in a unit unless prior permission is granted. Extension approval will be

dependent on actual utilization assessment as compared to the established allowable for the pasture.

3. Rangeland Improvements - The permittee is involved as a cooperator in rangeland improvements and is responsible in maintaining all structural improvements once constructed. New construction will be assessed for compliance to standards as set forth in the permit modification. Maintenance of existing improvements is a requirement of the term permit. When improvements are inventoried not meeting standards the permittee will be notified, and a date agreed upon when the structure will be maintained.

B. Effectiveness monitoring relates to the prescriptions applied on the ground and whether or not they meet the goals and objectives as described in the AMP, and monitoring requirements as set forth on the Environmental Assessment.

1. Parker 3-Step monitoring points will be read in the year 2001 within the key areas to determine range and current ground cover conditions. At a minimum, existing range resource value ratings and ground cover conditions will be maintained at levels as inventoried in 1994 (Kaibab National Forest, unpublished data).

2. To some degree, the monitoring of utilization will denote the effectiveness of the permittees salting and herding program. Both practices are critical in maintaining utilization rates at or below the allowable.

3. A three year production/utilization survey will be conducted to determine if the grazing permittee is accomplishing the assigned allowable use objectives.

C. Validation monitoring is conducted to determine if management actions are resolving the issues identified in the project level scoping. The three issues addressed include wildlife, range condition and trend, as well as economics. To accomplish this portion of the monitoring plan close coordination between the Game and Fish Department and the grazing permittee is a necessary component. The Game and Fish Department will need to provide the Forest Service their population estimates for the indicator species track in the analysis which includes, elk, deer, and antelope. This information will need to be provided, at a minimum, in the year 2001 when the key area clusters are inventoried. This analysis will demonstrate if the indicator species, deer, and antelope have increased in populations based on the anticipated improvement in range ecosystem diversity and capacity.

The annual operational plan will incorporate the standards set forth in this document into all activities which are scheduled for the allotment in that year. This will include the pasture rotation, scheduled deferment periods, allowable use, structural improvement work, range vegetation improvement work, and salting practices.

This plan will be in effect for the next ten years. However, after six years

this plan will be reviewed, and a determination made as to its effectiveness in accomplishing the stated goals and objectives. If needed, additional analysis will be conducted and a new decision as well as amendment to this plan undertaken.

This plan is consistent with standards, guidelines, and management prescriptions as found in the Kaibab National Forest Plan.